

# South Dakota National Guard

## Public Affairs Office

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **Sling Load operation essential to engineer mission**

By Spc. Carl Johnson  
129<sup>th</sup> Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

RAPID CITY, S.D. – Soldiers from the 133rd Engineer Company, Wyoming National Guard restored a trailhead in the Black Hills, June 14, as part of the 32nd Golden Coyote training exercise.

The engineers restored the Mystic Trailhead near Sheridan Lake Road, to support the Black Hills National Forest. They tore down a damaged gazebo, used gravel to restore the parking area and placed rocks around the perimeter to limit unauthorized vehicle use.

“We are thankful to have the National Guard out here today,” said Ben Schumacher, project coordinator, Black Hills National Forest. “Without their expertise and equipment, it would have been difficult to get these projects accomplished.”

The day ended with CH-47 Chinook helicopters sling loading some of the engineers equipment to the next work site at Lakota Lake near Keystone, S.D.

“We coordinated with other units and found a way to get our equipment where it needed to be,” said Chief Warrant Officer Ellison Kurtz of the 133rd. “Moving equipment by helicopter is much faster and will save us several man hours tomorrow.”

Riggers from Company D, 334th Brigade Support Battalion, Iowa National Guard finished preparing skid steers with slings just minutes before pilots from the Republic Singapore Air Force lowered a CH-47 Chinook within feet of the equipment. Cpt. Clint Boatman, Commander of the 334th, climbed on top of the 133rd’s skid steer and attached the sling. The pilots took off for Lakota Lake with the skid steer attached.

“Training like this allows us to practice our skills in an environment that is similar to overseas operations,” said Boatman. “Working with other nations is an essential part of modern warfare.”

Cpt. Jared Gledhill, also of Company D, was communicating with the pilots by radio throughout the lift and had the responsibility of making sure everyone on the ground was safe.

“Safety is our number one priority,” said Gledhill. “Nobody got hurt and it was an efficient use of resources. Mission accomplished.”

While the helicopter sling load operation was the highlight of the day, the engineers’ work at Mystic Trailhead will benefit the community for years to come.

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High resolution photos are available at [www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard](http://www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard)



**160614-Z-FO002-183:** Members of the 133rd Engineer Battalion, Wyoming Army National Guard, load a dump truck with an excavator as part of the 32nd Golden Coyote training exercise at a quarry near Rapid City, S.D. June 14, 2016. The rocks were used as a part of the Mystic Trailhead restoration project. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Carl Johnson/Released)



**160614-Z-FO002-231:** A member of the 133rd Engineer Battalion, Wyoming National Guard, topples a crumbling gazebo as a part of the 32nd Golden Coyote training exercise at Mystic Trailhead near Rapid City, S.D. June 14, 2016. The 133rd was restoring the trailhead for the Black Hills National Forest as a training operation. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Carl Johnson/Released)



**160614-Z-FO002-295:** Sgt. First Class Steven Hiser of the 133rd Engineer Battalion, Wyoming Army National Guard, uses a pick axe to create a space for rock to rest at the Mystic Trailhead near Rapid City, S.D. June 14, 2016. The 133rd was restoring the trailhead for the Black Hills National Forest as a training operation. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Carl Johnson/Released)



**160614-Z-FO002-417:** Members of Company D, 334th Brigade Support Battalion, Iowa Army National Guard, rig up an Army skid steer in preparation to be picked up by a CH-47 Chinook helicopter at the Mystic Trailhead, near Rapid City, S.D. June 14, 2016. The 133rd Engineer Battalion, Wyoming Army National Guard, restored the trailhead for the Black Hills National Forest as a training operation and needed the equipment moved to their next project at Lakota Lake by Keystone, S.D. (U.S. Army



**160614-Z-FO002-605:** Capt. Clint Boatman of Company D, 334th Brigade Support Battalion, Iowa Army National Guard, attaches a skid steer to a Chinook helicopter, flown by pilots from the Royal Singapore Air Force at Mystic Trailhead near Rapid City, S.D. June 14, 2016. The 133rd Engineering Battalion, Wyoming National Guard, finished restoring a trailhead for the Black Hills National Forest and needed the equipment moved to another project at Lakota Lake near Keystone, S.D. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Carl Johnson/Released)



**160614-Z-FO002-626:** Members of the 133rd Engineering Battalion, Wyoming National Guard, watch as pilots from the Royal Singapore Air Force transport equipment from Mystic Trailhead near Rapid City, S.D. The 133rd finished restoring a trailhead for the Black Hills National Forest and needed the equipment moved to another project location at Lakota Lake near Keystone, S.D. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Carl Johnson/Released)

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